

Meeting Summary

Seismic Safety Committee

August 30, 2001

Summary



- SSC approved tactical approaches for the eight charter objectives.
- SSC approved the following four subcommittees and selected four subcommittee chairs:
 - Eric Holdeman – Emergency Management
 - Ken Korshaven – Structures
 - Craig Weaver – Lifelines
 - Tony Qamar – Information & Technology
- In the absence of Chair Doug Sutherland, Vice Chairs Ron Teissere and Glen Woodbury will lead the SSC.
- The SSC will hold its next meeting in late October.

The List of Meeting Participants for August 30, 2001 and the current SSC Membership Roster are located at the end of this meeting summary.

Meeting Agenda

The purpose of this half-day meeting was to approve the tactical approach to the SSC charter objectives, establish four SSC subcommittees, and approve staffing suggestions for those subcommittees.

Introduction

Doug Sutherland, SSC Chair, opened the meeting. He asked for and received approval of the June 21, 2001 meeting summary.

George Crawford updated the group on the status of SSC charter objectives. The draft objectives were presented to and approved by the EMC on July 1.

George announced that two people are needed to sit in on the Review Panel for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). One person, Craig Weaver, has volunteered. A second volunteer is needed within the next 30 days. This individual's organization must not be applying for a HMGP grant.

SSC Charter Objectives

(George Crawford – EMD)

George presented the following eight charter objectives:

1. Identify and promote existing state, local and regional mitigation initiatives that model implementation of SCC-advocated strategies
2. Coordinate development of a statewide strategy for educating, mitigating, planning and responding to the threat of seismic events. Review the Seismic Safety Advisory Committee's *A Policy Plan for Improving Earthquake Safety in Washington—Fulfilling Our Responsibility* (December 1, 1991).
3. Promote an effective and coordinated mechanism and disseminate risk and threat information.
4. Identify resource opportunities to include, but not limited to, funding, equipment, staffing, and technology. Recommend appropriate lead agencies or entities for specific seismic issues.
5. Provide a forum for general coordination and exchange of information among federal, state, local and private entities.
6. Recommend legislation and policy changes to improve and enhance statewide seismic safety.
7. Develop a method for an annual assessment report of statewide implementation of seismic safety improvements, deficiencies, and needs to the EMC using a consistent format and method.
8. On a cost-benefit basis, evaluate and prioritize recommendations for life safety, property, environment, and economic vitality of the state.

Tactical Approach: How Do We Do This?

The Chair called for questions and posed the issue of what process the group will take to meet the objectives.

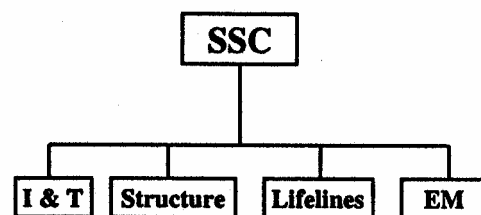
Form Subcommittees

Four subcommittees need to meet and confirm membership within the next 45 days:

1. Emergency Management
2. Structures
3. Lifelines
4. Information and technology (I&T)

The Chairs selected for each subcommittee must also staff that subcommittee.

Subcommittee membership is not limited to SSC. One suggestion was to bring in



individuals with expertise needed to meet charter objectives. Don Ballentine, a structural engineer, is an example. Business leaders are especially needed.

A goal of the subcommittees is to get information to the SSC. The following table shows where responsibilities lie for achieving all eight charter objectives:

Charter Objectives Responsibility Matrix

Objective #	EM	Structure	Lifelines	I&T	Full SSC
1	X	X	X	X	
2	X	X	X	X	
3					X
4	X	X	X	X	
5					X
6					X
7				X	
8	X	X	X	X	

Objectives 1, 2, 4 and 8 (All Subcommittees):

The steps for meeting objectives 1, 2, 4 and 8 are to review previous policy documents, to develop a new policy plan, and to effectively communicate this information to the SSC for presentation and approval of the EMC. These objectives apply to all four subcommittees.

Review Past Policy. This step requires review of policies recommended in the 1991 plan in light of recent scientific and technical advances. Five sources of information need to be reviewed:

- *A Policy Plan for Improving Earthquake Safety in Washington* (1991 plan)
- *Earthquake Safety in Washington State: A Progress Report on Activities 1992 – 1997*
- *Washington State Hazard Mitigation Strategy* (January 2000)
- Nisqually Earthquake reports
- Tsunami and volcano documents

Develop New Policy. This step begins by answering the question: Where are we now in the process? Several milestones loom:

Product	Purpose	Due
Update to 1991 plan	Guide legislation. To include information on Seattle Fault and hazards	Late 2002
Inputs to <i>Washington State Hazard Mitigation Strategy</i> (January 2000)	Required for FEMA HMGP funding	January 2002
Subcommittee Chairs meet with SSC Vice Chair	Kick-off Subcommittee actions	Late October 2002
Subcommittee Chairs update to SSC	Progress reports. Full reports	Quarterly. End of May
SSC Chair updates EMC	Progress reports	bimonthly

All of these products will lead to reports and recommendations. The state legislative cycle is important to factor into the schedule. This process overall spans two legislative sessions. Subcommittees need to determine how they will meet objectives and discuss this with the Chair/Vice Chairs within the next 45 days.

The EMC meets bimonthly (every other month). During those meetings, the SSC Chair will provide reports for EMC information/approval.

Objective 7 (I&T)

This objective answers the need to find a consistent way to communicate seismic data. It applies to the Information & Technology Subcommittee. The group noted that this topic is crosscutting and needs input from other subcommittees. George offered six steps to completing this process:

1. Review potential formats and methods for reporting data
2. Develop a consistent format and method for an Annual Assessment report
3. Circulate these ideas for review and comment
4. Chair meets with Vice Chairs within 45 days (late October 2001)
5. Subcommittee makes updates to SSC quarterly
6. Chair provides completed format and methods reporting recommendation to EMC for approval.

Objective 8 (Subcommittee Chairs)

This objective is to recommend and rank policy options. The process for this is a three-tiered:

1. Subcommittee chairs will provide inputs and recommendations to Chair/Vice Chairs
2. SSC will approve documents
3. Chair will compile information and present it to EMC

Objectives 3 and 5 (SSC)

George proposed a three-step process to meet objectives for promoting and exchanging the information SSC gathers:

1. SSC meets periodically to review and discuss seismic issues
2. SSC provides a forum for briefings and information exchange
3. SSC creates communities to work seismic safety issues statewide to guide legislative recommendations to EMC.

Select Subcommittee Chairs and Members

George called for vice chairs to make this all work. Subcommittees will need to have some preliminary information available within the next 90 days. He recommended the following subcommittee chairs:

- Eric Holdeman – EM
- Ken Korshaven – Structures
- Craig Weaver – Lifelines
- Tony Qamar – I&T

After naming the subcommittee chairs, the group discussed a number of issues related to staffing the subcommittees. The major points raised were the following:

- Overlap. The four subcommittees have overlap. The group agreed to cross-representation. For example, a bridge is both a structure and a lifeline.
- Lifelines. Lifeline issues are large enough to require working groups within the subcommittee.
- Eastern Washington. SSC and subcommittee chairs are committed to ensuring that eastern Washington is included.
- Tasking. The subcommittees are charged with two initial tasks:
 1. Revise the earthquake section of the *Washington State Hazard Mitigation Strategy* document. This update is a requirement for funding of the HMGP. It must be completed in 90 days.
 2. Rewrite *A Policy Plan for Improving Earthquake Safety in Washington* (1991). The four subcommittee Chairs will work with SSC staff and Ron Teissere to develop a timeline. The timeline must ensure the final document is available to the Executive Branch to formulate initiatives to the 2003 Washington State Legislative Session.

George announced that the review documents are available from EMD. Call or email at him at **253-512-7067** or **g.crawford@emd.gov.wa**.

Public Assistance Program Update

(Diane Offord – SCO)

Diane Offord updated the SSC on the status of the Public Assistance Program six months after the Nisqually Earthquake. The program appears to be running well. Working with FEMA, the state has adopted a program of going slowly rather than too quickly with funding decisions. This approach is based on lessons learned for the Northridge earthquake. The Northridge response made public funding decisions before the full extent of the earthquake's effects was understood.

Diane provided the following details on Public Assistance Program efforts to date:

- 330 applicants to the program.
- 1500 projects. Review is complete on 1/3 of these.
- Current dollar estimate for these projects is \$50 to 100 M.
- Taking more time to define small projects (\$50,000). From the state's point of view, this close review has worked well. It will make auditing easier.
- More complex projects (those with historical building status or environmental issues) need a separate review. Most of these projects have been reviewed.
- Some applicants have withdrawn from the program for a variety of reasons, one of which is the requirement to purchase insurance for the building in the amount of FEMA funds

received.

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Update

(Marty Best – EMD)

Marty Best briefed the group on HMGP status, a major topic of the previous meeting. Awards under the HMGP are calculated based on a 15% percent of total FEMA disaster relief funds. Because the Public Assistance Program has lowered its loss estimates, the HMGP has gone down about \$30M.

Discussion. Marty's report brought out the following group discussion points:

- Following an earthquake, damage estimates typically go up over time as field investigations are completed. The Nisqually Earthquake differs from this national trend because damage estimates are going down. FEMA's interpretation of damage in the field and a new desire on the part of that agency to narrow its disaster relief obligations account for that interpretation of the Stafford Act. This policy as applied in the Nisqually Earthquake is pushing more damage costs to the building owner and insurance companies.
- FEMA is looking carefully at lack of maintenance as a cause of damage. An example was cited of an individual in Lynnwood whose radio mast failed during the earthquake. On inspection, however, it was clear the mast had dry rot, which FEMA interpreted as a maintenance failure.
- In contrast to the ongoing issues with FEMA, the Federal Highway Administration made \$93M available to WSDOT one week after the quake. All repair work has been completed and monies have been spent.

Insurance Concerns. FEMA regulations specify that if insurance is generally available on projects they are funding, it must be purchased by the close of the project. The Insurance Commissioner's Office is working on interpreting what is meant by "generally available." Guidelines are due September 15.

FEMA's interpretation is built on floods, which, unlike earthquakes, occur in known lowland areas. The fact that flood areas are known has been codified into the National Flood Insurance Program. If you build in a floodplain, you are required to participate in that program.

An applicant can request an insurance waiver at the time they make their application.

The group discussed several issues with the state self-insurance program. First, there is a \$200M cap on insurance, meaning that in any one year only \$200M is available no matter how many earthquakes may occur. Second, some state agencies may be facing large deductibles (\$250,000). Third, there is concern that state agencies may let their coverage lapse over time raising the possibility that the state would have to return FEMA money.

The SSC feels that problems with insurance need to be documented to ensure statewide awareness of the issues.

After Action Review Meeting. The meeting closed with an open discussion of the August 29, 2001 state-sponsored after action review meeting held to critique recovery efforts of the Nisqually

Earthquake. About 50 people attended representing city, county, and state government agencies participating in the recovery process, with FEMA also represented. A formal report will be forthcoming. The participants of that meeting asked that the following five points be incorporated into the SSC's work:

1. The Non-structural Mitigation in the Workplace. The Nisqually Earthquake shows the importance of non-structural mitigation. We've done a good job educating school children. Many office buildings, however, were unusable due to non-structural failures.
2. Selective Review of Building Codes. Participants urged a re-examination of chimneys, water storage tanks, and other basic infrastructure systems. Using the Nisqually Earthquake, it may be possible to identify code changes that will bring about better non-structural performance.
3. Success Stories. There is a need to recognize the successes of retrofitting and mitigation.
4. Agency Awareness. Public agencies need to educate employees in better personal preparedness. Public employees need to be able to quickly survey their own residences and family status so that they are better prepared to serve broader public needs after any disaster, including an earthquake.
5. Seismic Maps. EMC questions the accuracy of current seismic hazard maps. They want to know how much new work is represented in these USGS-produced seismic hazard maps. The EMC was also concerned that the seismic design maps, used by engineers in structural design, reflect the most current understanding.

Operations of SSC

(Doug Sutherland – Chair)

The Chair asked for input on SSC basic operations.

- Vice Chairs. Ron Teissere and Glen Woodbury will be Vice Chairs for Doug.
- Next SSC Meeting. The EMC meets the first Thursday in November. The SSC needs to meet sometime in the end of October.
- Exchanging information. What is best? Whose responsibility is this? Can we get information via email and come together to make presentations?
- CREW Meeting. Bob Frietag extended an invitation to the SSC to attend the November 27 and 28 CREW meeting in Seattle. Its topic is "The Business of Earthquakes: Lessons learned from the Nisqually Earthquake."

SSC MEETING PARTICIPANTS

August 30, 2001

Mr. Doug Sutherland, Chair (DNR)
Maj Gen Timothy Lowenberg (Military Department)
Mr. Glenn Woodbury, Vice-Chair (EMD)
Mr. Ron Teissere, Vice-Chair (DNR)
Mr. Dennis Anderson, Washington State Department of Health
Mr. Bob Frietag, CREW
Ms. Karin Frinell-Hanrahan, Grays Harbor County
Mr. Eric Holdeman, King County Emergency Management
Mr. Ken Korshaven, City of Lynnwood
Mr. Jerald Lavassar, Ecology
Mr. Dan Mageau, Geoengineers/ASCE
Dr. Hal Mofjeld, NOAA
Dr. Steve Palmer, DNR (Guest)
Dr. Anthony Qamar, University of Washington
Ms. Joan Scofield, Office of the Insurance Commissioner
Mr. Terry Simmons, WSDOT
Mr. Tim Walsh, DNR
Dr. Craig Weaver, USGS
Ms. Deborah Henderson, EMD
Ms. Maillian Uphaus, EMD
Mr. George Crawford, EMD

Membership Roster 2001-2002

Seismic Safety Committee

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